

# District Reporter

STEGER  
DISTRICT 194

*Spring 2017*

## District 194 Building Project Nears Completion

Steger District 194 is looking forward to the 2017-18 school year and the grand opening of yet another state-of-the-art grade center building. The new Steger Primary Center is set to open in August as construction nears completion at the former Saukview site. The building project, which began in 2014 with the groundbreaking for the Steger Intermediate Center, represents the culmination of a monumental change that saw Steger District 194 shift from a neighborhood school model of instruction to a grade center model of instruction.

"The grade center model will offer our students shared experiences for growth the the former model could not," said Paul Preuss, Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Preuss continued, "The shift to grade centers will allow much greater and easier sharing of district resources to all students."

The transition to grade centers has seen a great deal of day-to-day change throughout the district. During the 2015 school year, the 5th grade was moved to Columbia Central, while in the project's first year, Parkview School saw the 2nd through 4th grades occupy its halls. With the completion of the new



*Architectural styles will tie Steger Primary Center (rendering on left) to Steger Intermediate Center.*

Steger Intermediate Center, Parkview again saw a new group of residents with District 194's Kindergarten and 1st grade classes moving temporarily into the building as Saukview School underwent renovations. Principals, staff, students and parents all deserve a thank you from District 194 for showing the adaptability and patience necessary to complete this transition. As we near the completion of the building project, Steger Primary Center's staff will begin packing up their classrooms for the final move to the building. District 194 looks forward to the future of student achievement with the transition to grade centers.

### Art Department invites visitors to The Palette

This year, the Steger District 194 Art Department began sharing student artwork online with their collaborative art blog appropriately named, "The Palette." Dr. Patricia Hahto, Superintendent, said of the arts, "The important work accomplished by the Art Department is vital to our students' growth." In addition to hosting the online exhibit, the Steger District 194 Art Department hosts an annual fine arts fair each March. You can visit "The Palette" at <https://stegerart.wordpress.com> or use the QR code below on your smartphone.



STEGER  
DISTRICT 194

A word from the  
Superintendent  
page 4



## Columbia Central Sports Corner

The Columbia Central 7th Grade Lady Cardinal Volleyball team completed a successful season with the team's second trip to the IESA State Finals. The Lady Cards completed their regular season with a 13-2 record before entering the Conference Tournament. In the Conference Tournament, Columbia Central powered past Chicago Heights Washington and Matteson Colin Powell before falling in the Conference Final to Flossmoor Parker. The following week during IESA play, the Cardinals would vanquish the Parker Falcons in the Regional Championship by a score of 25-13, 25-19. This win moved the Lady Cards one step closer to their goal of a State Finals appearance. In Sectional play, the Cardinals faced Lansing Memorial. In a late evening showdown at neutral site James Hart, the Cardinals prevailed again 25-23, 25-20 with outside hitter Lexi Jackson battling strep throat. This win paved the way to the State Finals in



Normal. The Lady Cards would travel behind a police escort courtesy of the Steger Police Department out of town to face Edwardsville Lincoln. In Normal, the Cardinals fought hard but were unable to stop the left handed hitting of the Lincoln Wildcats. The Cardinals' season ended with a record of 18-5. The team looks forward to a strong 8th grade season.

## Summer Reading

Steger District 194 will again be providing summer reading to students in Kindergarten through 4th grade. This year's reading list includes: The Lunch Box Surprise, Look! I Can Read, Henry and Mudge, Freckle Juice, The Fabled Fourth Graders of Aesop Elementary School, and Sideways Stories from Wayside School. District 194 looks forward to sharing these books with its students and looks forward to you sharing them with your children over the summer.



## Curriculum Corner

Change is an inevitable component in the world of education. With each new school year, we see a new set of students, and we make adjustments to meet the needs of those students. We do the same with our curriculum, instruction, budget, lessons, etc. Some change comes from the local district and others come from the state and federal government. Either way, the mission is to improve the direction and effectiveness of programs or departments within a school district.

Locally, we are working on curriculum, instruction, and assessments. We are following an instructional strategic plan which will drive us forward as we generate and update our scope and sequence through the process of curriculum mapping. This process will create curriculum alignment within the grade/department levels, so we address the required content in each grade/department.

In addition, another important goal is to provide our teachers with the tools to continually improve and enhance their instructional practices. With a wealth of tools and strategies, we can provide our students lessons which are differentiated and meaningful. Instructional practice is one of the single-most important aspects of the learning process, so we dedicate ourselves to continually developing in this area.

Furthermore, assessment data is crucial to the learning process. This data helps us to initiate instruction to best meet the needs of our students. This year will be using a new benchmarking assessment called NWEA-MAP. If you would like to know more

about NWEA-MAP, please go to <https://www.nwea.org/>. Students will be tested in reading and mathematics in the fall, winter, and spring. This benchmarking assessment provides data to help us make decisions on the path of instruction. All students in grades 1-8 will be tested three times a year. Kindergarten will use the benchmarking system called AIMS-web which allows for a more one-on-one approach.

The state and federal governments are initiating changes with the Title grants. A new District Title I plan is being developed with a team of faculty, parents and administrators. This plan will provide direction and focus for our Title programming. Currently, we are a schoolwide Title I program at Steger Primary Center and Steger Intermediate Center.

Lastly, as the school year comes to an end, we will once again provide our students in grades K-4 with summer reading books to help our students reduce the "summer slide" we often see when kids return from summer break. We ask you to read with your child this summer. Students will get a book and family engagement activity the last day of school, so you should expect to see this come home with them. All the family engagement activities can be found on our school website also – [www.sd194.org](http://www.sd194.org). Moreover, we also encourage you to find ways for kids to practice mathematics. All of the following provide ways to practice mathematics: cooking (measurement), shopping (fractions/percentages), building and constructing (geometry), and jump rope (counting).

We hope you have a great summer. Keep on learning.

Engaging every student...every day... in quality learning opportunities.



## Looking for a Friend? Find a Buddy Bench.

When Art Teacher, Melissa Lorenzatti, received a \$2,500 grant through the Farmer's Insurance "Thank a Million Teachers" program, she decided to use most of her grant on buddy benches because it touches on the social/emotional aspect of teaching.

"I wanted to help the wandering lone child at recess," said Ms. Lorenzatti. If students need someone to play with, they simply sit on the bench. All students are supposed to be on the lookout, but the Steger Intermediate Center has a few students who volunteered to be "bench watchers" and glance over at the benches periodically. If these students see anyone on the bench, they go ask them if they want to play. "As a teacher, you get such a warm feeling to see kids come up to the student on the bench and watch them as they run off playing together," added Lorenzatti. "We explained at recess earlier in the year that it is our goal to always have an empty buddy bench because that would mean everyone has someone to play with." Both buddy benches will be located at the Steger Intermediate Center playground and were painted by Ms. Lorenzatti and the Art Club.



## Happenings From Around the District



*Top left: Mr. Moses receives a Hero Award, Bottom left: Young Authors winners pose with sponsors Mrs. McNamara and Mr. Muehring, Right: Bloom Trail Chemistry Club visits Steger Intermediate Center*

### Mr. Moses Receives Hero Award

Gavin Ebert nominated Mr. Bill Moses, PE teacher at the Steger Intermediate Center, for the Hero Award for Cub Scouts. Gavin stated that he felt Mr. Moses deserved the award because he is doing a great thing by involving students in the Jump Rope for Heart program each year. Mr. Moses was very honored, stating that these are the great moments that remind him of why he became a teacher.

### Bloom Trail Chemistry Club Visit

Fourth graders were treated to a great afternoon of science led by Mr. Chris Clausing, Chemistry teacher at Bloom Trail, and his group of Chemistry Club students. Students were in awe of all the exciting effects they witnessed through the experiments, including chemical reactions, frozen banana hammers, and loud booms. SIC students shared that they cannot wait to join that club when they go to high school. Many of the Chemistry Club members are former SD 194 students.

### Steger Primary Students are Young Authors

Over 90 Steger Primary Center students participated in the Young Authors program this year. Young Authors is a program in which students choose a topic and write and illustrate their own books. Students were recognized for their hard work at a celebration pizza party on April 7<sup>th</sup>. Parents joined the authors at the celebration to hear them read their wonderful stories. All students received a recognition ribbon and the authors of the top three books were awarded trophies. Young Authors is a program sponsored by two Steger Primary Center staff members, Mrs. McNamara, a first grade teacher, and Mr. Muehring, a member of our Title I team. District 194 would like to congratulate all of our Young Authors winners and participants for a job well done.

# STEGER DISTRICT 194

Administration Center  
3753 Park Avenue, Steger, IL  
753-4300

Columbia Central  
94 Richton Road, Steger, IL  
755-0021

Steger Intermediate Center  
3411 Hopkins Street, Steger, IL  
753-4200

Steger Primary Center  
100 Richton Road, Steger, IL  
753-4100

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## A Word From Superintendent Hahto

Dear Steger Community Members,

I am pleased to report to you that Steger School District 194 is taking an active part in promoting our school district and its communities to potential home buyers. Our first step in this effort is to host a breakfast and tour of our schools for area realtors.

Why are we doing this? It is because we want potential home buyers to be aware that by choosing Steger schools for their children's education, they have chosen wisely. For example, School District 194 offers

- The lowest property tax rate of all surrounding school districts
- Award-winning facilities
- Grade Center philosophy
- Low class sizes
- Dedicated board members, administrators, faculty and staff

Here are some features from each school highlighted in the brochure under the title, *Snapshot of Learning*.

Steger Primary Center

- A focus on higher-order thinking
- Differentiated learning
- Attention to social and emotional needs of students

Steger Intermediate Center

- Learning that takes place in innovative group spaces
- An inviting Media Center

Columbia Central

- A newly updated STEM Lab
- A robust arts program that includes several bands and choirs, Art, Computers, STEM, and theatrical performances
- A focus on authentic learning

We look forward to the Realtor Breakfast as a starting-off point in promoting our school district and the communities it serves.

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the many dedicated individuals who have worked together in planning the Realtors' Breakfast and tour. Many thanks to Anne Leuring who spear-headed this project and her planning team of Michele Helsel, Melissa Cunha, Rachael Diehl, Tim Tuffs, Adam Schoff and Principals Mike Smith, Nicole Lindroth, Bruce Nieminski, Janet Inglese, Jeff Nelson, and Stephanie Winborn. They and their teams are to be congratulated for a job well done for a project close to all our hearts.

Patricia Fiorenzo Hahto, Ed.D.  
Superintendent



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